

# 2024 District 9 Hunting Prospects

## Clark, Skamania, and Klickitat counties

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Washington  
Department of  
**FISH &  
WILDLIFE**

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# 2024 District 9 Hunting Prospects

Clark, Skamania, and Klickitat counties

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# Table of Contents

<b>District 9 general overview</b> .....	<b>4</b>
GMU overviews .....	6
GMU 382 - East Klickitat.....	6
GMU 388 - Grayback .....	6
GMU 578 - West Klickitat .....	7
GMU 574 - Wind River.....	7
GMU 572 - Siouxon .....	7
GMU 560 - Lewis River .....	7
GMU 554 - Yale.....	8
GMU 568 - Washougal .....	8
GMU 564 - Battle Ground .....	8
<b>Elk</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Elk population information .....	10
Elk hoof disease (TAHD) .....	11
<b>Deer</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Black bear</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Cougar</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>Waterfowl</b> .....	<b>19</b>
Goose hunting.....	20
Important information for Area 2 goose hunting .....	20
Duck hunting .....	21
<b>Turkey</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>Forest grouse</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>Dove</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<b>Pheasant</b> .....	<b>32</b>
Clark County pheasant release sites .....	33
Shillapoo Wildlife Area .....	33
Klickitat County Pheasant Release Sites.....	33
Goldendale Hatchery Pheasant Release Site .....	33
<b>Quail, gray partridge, and chukar</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>Public land resources</b> .....	<b>36</b>
DNR-Pacific Cascades Office (Clark and Skamania counties) .....	36

DNR-Southeast Region Office (Klickitat County).....	36
Gifford Pinchot National Forest .....	36
Cowlitz Valley Ranger District .....	36
Mt. Adams Ranger District .....	36
Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument and District.....	36
Forest Headquarters .....	36
<b>Private Lands Access Resources .....</b>	<b>37</b>
WDFW Private Lands Access Program .....	37
<b>Private industrial forestlands.....</b>	<b>38</b>
Broughton Lumber Company (American Forest Management) .....	38
DGS Timber LLC (American Forest Management).....	38
Manulife (formerly Hancock Forest Management - HFM).....	38
PacifiCorp .....	38
Rayonier.....	38
The Conservation Fund/Lupine Forest/Lupine Columbia Holdings LLC (formerly Stevenson Land Company).....	39
Green Diamond Resource Company/TCT Columbia Holdings (formerly Stevenson Land Company or Broughton Lumber) .....	39
Weyerhaeuser .....	39
Western Pacific Timber .....	39

## District 9 general overview

District 9 is in the southwest/central part of Washington and is the only district in the state that spans the Cascade Crest. Game management units (GMUs) in District 9 include 554 (Yale), 564 (Battle Ground), 568 (Washougal), 560 (Lewis River), 572 (Siouxon), 574 (Wind River), 578 (West Klickitat), 388 (Grayback), and 382 (East Klickitat). Hunters can choose from a variety of habitats, as well as areas covered by westside or eastside season dates and permit regulations.

The Cascade Mountain Range dominates the geography of District 9, dividing the district into westside and eastside zones. Topography varies from near sea level along the Columbia River and its lower tributaries to alpine habitats associated with Mount St. Helens and Mount Adams in the Cascade Range.

Dominant westside river drainages include the Lewis, Washougal, and Wind rivers. Major eastside watersheds include the White Salmon and Klickitat rivers. Rock Creek in eastern Klickitat County is the primary watershed in ponderosa pine/oak and shrubsteppe portions of the district. The Columbia River bounds the southern border of the district.

District 9 features some of the most diverse habitats in the state and includes westside coniferous forests dominated by Douglas fir and western hemlock. These forests give way to Oregon white oak and ponderosa pine as you travel east of the Cascade Mountains. In eastern Klickitat County, pine and oak habitat transition into shrubsteppe dominated by grassland and sagebrush.

The Gifford Pinchot National Forest and Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) lands make up the majority of the westside forestland. These lands are open to public access. Weyerhaeuser owns blocks of land in GMU 568 (Washougal) and scattered lands throughout GMU 578 (West Klickitat). Hunters must have permits or leases to access most of this land. More information about [recreation on Weyerhaeuser property can be found on their website](#). **Weyerhaeuser only allows free public access on their lands that are enrolled in the WDFW Private Lands Access Program.** To locate those lands, visit the [Private Lands Hunting Access webpage](#).

Eastside forest and shrubsteppe/grassland habitat is primarily privately owned with limited public access. Large tracts of private timberland in GMUs 574 and 578, which typically allow some degree of public hunting access opportunities, are held or managed by the following companies: Manulife Forest Management (formerly Hancock), Green Diamond Resource Company/TCT Columbia Holdings (lands formerly owned by SDS), The Conservation Fund/Lupine Columbia Holdings (lands formerly owned by SDS), and American Forest Management. Green Diamond participates in the WDFW Private Lands Access Program, though much of the land open for public hunting access is listed as "TCT Columbia Holdings" on the Private Lands Hunting Access webpage. Be sure to check the [online map](#) to determine which land parcels are included. These lands are popular for deer, elk, bear, and turkey hunting but generally are not open to motorized vehicles.

Most participating timber companies maintain recreational access hotlines where hunters can find out if the land is closed before hunting. Hunters can find a list of recreational access websites and hotlines

maintained by private industrial timber companies at the end of this document. A list of timberlands enrolled in WDFW's hunting access programs can be found on [WDFW's Private Lands webpage](#). Due to high fire danger, as of July 28, 2024 all lands owned or managed by the following parties in Klickitat, Skamania, and Yakima counties are closed to public access until further notice: American Forest Management, Broughton Lumber Company, Columbia Land Trust, DGS Timber, Green Diamond Resource Company, Kreps Ranch, Kreps Family LLC, Lupine Forest, Manulife Forest Management, Twin Creeks Timber (TCT Holdings), and Western Pacific Timber LLC.

The [WDFW Hunt Planner webpage](#) has useful map layers like GMU and elk/deer area boundaries, roads, Wildlife Areas, and different types of base maps (aerial photos, topography). If you prefer to use online or mobile apps to plan your hunt, OnX Hunt includes all WDFW Private Lands Access properties as a separate layer when you add Washington from the list of states. Look for the "WA Private Lands Hunting Opportunities" layer and activate it with the toggle button.

For hunters interested in using e-bikes, note that they are typically considered motorized vehicles allowed only on roads and trails open to other motorized use (local regulations may vary). Hunters should check with each landowner, public or private, to ensure they are allowed. Please see the [WDFW](#) and [DNR](#) E-bike policy planning webpages for more information.

Visitors to WDFW- and DNR-managed lands with a parking placard for people with disabilities can use Class 1 and Class 2 e-bikes on all non-motorized natural surface trails and closed roads where bicycles are allowed until June 30, 2023, or until new legislation is enacted.



Hunting in GMU 568. Photo by Eric Holman.



## GMU overviews

### GMU 382 - East Klickitat

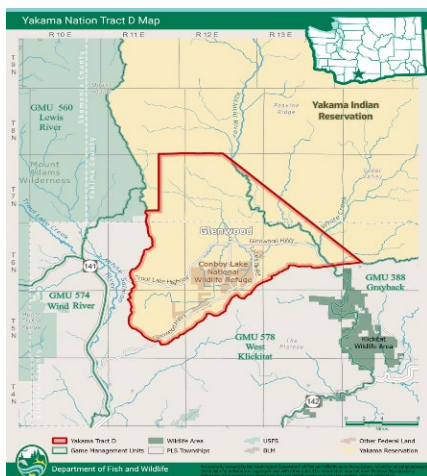
GMU 382 (East Klickitat) is almost exclusively private land except for the Klickitat Wildlife Area's [Simcoe Mountains Unit](#), which has some parcels of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land adjacent to it. There are several private hunt clubs that cater to deer and upland bird hunters. This GMU features mostly shrubsteppe and dryland agriculture, with oak-ponderosa forests in the northwestern quarter and major drainages. Deer are the most popular game species here, though chukar and partridge can also be found throughout the unit.

### GMU 388 - Grayback

GMU 388 (Grayback) is mostly private land, with the exception of the [Soda Springs Unit](#) and other small units of the Klickitat Wildlife Area. As of Sept. 1, 2023, all Western Pacific Timber lands in Klickitat County are **no longer open to any hunting access**. However, there are a few smaller [private lands hunting options](#) in this GMU. This GMU is a mix of shrubsteppe, dryland agriculture, and oak-ponderosa forests with heavier timbered areas in the northwest corner. The units of the Klickitat Wildlife Area provide good opportunities for deer and turkey hunting. There are a few scattered elk in the northwest part of the GMU and you will need an eastern elk tag to hunt elk here.

The northwest finger of this GMU is now within the boundary of the Yakama Nation as part of the area known as "Tract D" (see map below). As with all landowners' and jurisdictions, hunting is a privilege, and we remind you to please be respectful of landowners' posted access requirements. While there are no changes to the 2024-25 state hunting regulations within Tract D, please be extra aware that public or private land within Tract D is also within the Yakama Nation reservation. WDFW is committed to working with Yakama Nation on long-term management of wildlife within the Tract D area and other geographic areas where WDFW cooperatively manages wildlife with Yakama Nation.

Figure 1: Map of Tract D



## **GMU 578 - West Klickitat**

Most of GMU 578 (West Klickitat) is private land except for some blocks of DNR land and small parcels of the Klickitat Wildlife Area. The northern portion of this GMU is now within the boundary of the Yakama Nation as part of the area known as “Tract D” (see map above). As with all landownerships and jurisdictions, hunting is a privilege, and we remind you to please be respectful of landowners’ posted access requirements. While there are no changes to the 2024-25 state hunting regulations within Tract D, please be extra aware that public or private land within Tract D is also within the Yakama Nation reservation. WDFW is committed to working with Yakama Nation on long-term management of wildlife within the Tract D area and other geographic areas where WDFW cooperatively manages wildlife with Yakama Nation. There are several industrial forest landowners within this GMU, and many allow free public walk-in access (see section at the end of this document). Most of the GMU is forestland with a mix of oak-pine-conifer forests. This GMU has good success rates for deer and turkey, provides opportunity for elk in the northern and western parts of the GMU, and provides bear or cougar hunting opportunities.

## **GMU 574 - Wind River**

GMU 574 (Wind River) is primarily public land, with most lands in the [Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area](#) and [Gifford Pinchot National Forest](#), along with a large block of DNR land in the western quarter of the GMU. In the southwestern part of the GMU, there are a couple private industrial forest landowners that allow free walk-in hunting access (see section at the end of this document). Mixed conifer forests dominate this GMU, which has good road access on public lands. Deer and elk will be more abundant and accessible in the areas where there are clearcuts or recent forest thinning. Forest grouse can be found throughout the GMU, while turkeys can be found in lower elevation southern and eastern portions of the unit.

## **GMU 572 - Siouxon**

GMU 572 (Siouxon) is almost entirely within the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. In 2020, the Big Hollow Fire burned a significant portion of GMU 572. Hazardous conditions and closures may still be present. For the latest information on closures, please check with the [Gifford Pinchot National Forest](#) before scouting or hunting and [read more about the fire](#) on the Forest Service website. The northwest corner of this GMU is DNR land, and [PacifiCorp](#) offers free walk-in hunting access on some of its lands along the reservoirs in the northern part of the unit. Mixed conifer forests dominate this GMU, which has good road access on public lands. Deer and elk will be more abundant and accessible in the areas where there are clear-cuts or recent forest thinning. Forest grouse can be found throughout the GMU.

## **GMU 560 - Lewis River**

GMU 560 (Lewis River) is quite large, with most of the land located within the [Gifford Pinchot National Forest](#). [PacifiCorp](#) offers free walk-in hunting access along the reservoirs in the southern part of this GMU. Mixed conifer forests dominate this GMU, which has good road access on the National Forest lands. Deer and elk will be more abundant and accessible in the areas where there are meadows or



recent forest thinning or fires. This GMU offers bear or cougar hunting opportunity. Forest grouse can also be found throughout the GMU.

### **GMU 554 - Yale**

GMU 554 (Yale) is small and primarily located within Clark County, which has firearms restrictions (see page 90 of the Big Game pamphlet). This GMU offers some DNR land in addition to free walk-in access on some of [PacifiCorp](#)'s lands. Deer and elk will be more abundant and accessible in the areas where there are clearcuts or recent forest thinning.

### **GMU 568 - Washougal**

GMU 568 (Washougal) has a mix of private, DNR, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, and private industrial forest lands. The [Yacolt Burn State Forest](#) is a popular and accessible spot for residents of Clark County. Walking or biking behind locked gates can be a good option to get away from other hunters. Mixed conifer forests dominate this GMU, which has good road access on public lands. This is a good GMU for black-tailed deer and offers bear or cougar hunting opportunity. Forest grouse can also be found throughout the GMU.

### **GMU 564 - Battle Ground**

GMU 564 (Battle Ground) is an urban/suburban area with firearms restrictions and consists primarily of private land. Each of the [Shillapoo Wildlife Area Units](#) provide good public access for waterfowl and upland game bird hunting, with limited black-tailed deer hunting. There is a pheasant release site at the Shillapoo Wildlife Area. [Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge](#) offers waterfowl hunting through a pre-season lottery reservation system.

# Elk



Elk in the Trout Lake Valley with Mt. Adams in the backdrop. Photo by WDFW.

WDFW manages elk in District 9 as part of the Mount St. Helens (MSH) Herd, detailed in the [Mount Saint Helens Elk Herd Plan](#) on the WDFW website. You can find more information on elk management in District 9 in the [Game Harvest Statistics](#) and [2023 Game Status and Trend Report](#).

Elk hunting within District 9 is managed under a variety of seasons, so hunters should check regulations closely before heading out. Hunters should be aware that GMUs 388 (Grayback) and 382 (East Klickitat) require Eastern Washington elk tags, while the remainder of District 9 is within the Western Washington elk tag area. Additionally, GMU 564 (Battle Ground) and 554 (Yale) are Firearm Restriction GMUs.

In terms of size, GMU 560 (Lewis River) offers the most opportunity for elk hunting in District 9. Most of this area is public land within the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. [PacifiCorp](#) also offers non-motorized access to their lands on the north side of Swift Reservoir. Early-season snow levels can affect hunter access and success during the modern firearm season. GMUs 574 (Wind River), 572 (Siouxon), and 578 (West Klickitat) are also good elk units. GMUs 574 and 572 are mainly public Forest Service and DNR lands, while GMU 578 is predominantly private land with some DNR land. Be sure to have good maps to identify land ownership in this area.

GMUs 388 and 382 in Klickitat County have very few elk and are generally considered better for deer hunting. GMU 564 in Clark County only has elk in the northern and eastern portions of the GMU. This

area has a mix of public and private lands, and it's important to research ownership before planning your hunt in this area.

Some areas may be closed to both motorized and non-motorized access. Even in familiar areas, we recommend extra scouting because elk distribution may have changed, and normal hunting lands may be closed due to fire danger.

## Elk population information

Elk populations in the GMUs comprising the Mount St Helens (MSH) Elk Herd area are down from historic high levels during the mid-2000s. This population reduction was implemented per the objectives of the [Mount Saint Helens Elk Herd Plan](#). Liberal antlerless elk hunting opportunity, combined with several years of late-winter and spring storms, reduced the elk population in these GMUs. The winter of 2016-17 was unusually severe, with early snowfall and persistent cold, wet conditions throughout the winter. Severe winters have a larger impact when animals are in relatively poor condition entering the winter. Elk within the MSH herd typically lack large fat reserves to help with long, hard winters.



Elk in the oaks in GMU 574. Photo by Chris Wilson.

Reflecting on these challenging conditions, the 2017 spring survey of elk in the monitored portions of the MSH herd showed a 30-35% reduction from 2016 numbers. The winters of 2017-18 and 2018-19 were mild, however elk hoof disease continues to impact survival and reproduction in this herd. Surveys conducted during the springs of 2018-2019 and 2022 indicated that the MSH elk herd had stabilized at a lower population level. Surveys were not conducted in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19 restrictions, and none were conducted in 2023 due to budget restrictions. The spring 2024 survey showed an increase of

38% in the estimate compared to spring 2022. This sizeable increase in the population estimate is a hopeful indicator that the reduction in antlerless opportunity in recent years is helping the population recover.

## Elk hoof disease (TAHD)

Since 2008, reports of elk with deformed, broken, or missing hooves have increased dramatically in southwest Washington, with sporadic observations in other areas west of the Cascade Range, including within the MSH elk herd area. While elk are susceptible to many conditions which result in limping or hoof deformities, the prevalence and severity of this affliction suggested something altogether different. WDFW diagnostic research (2009-2014), in conjunction with a panel of scientific advisors, found that these hoof abnormalities were strongly associated with treponeme bacteria, known to cause a hoof disease of cattle, sheep, and goats called digital dermatitis. Although digital dermatitis has affected the livestock industry for decades, treponeme-associated hoof disease (TAHD) is the first known instance of digital dermatitis in a wild ungulate. Disease prevalence is highest in Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, and western Lewis counties, but is also found in all three counties of District 9.

The entirety of District 9 falls within the MSH elk herd range. TAHD is most prevalent among elk in the southwestern part of Washington, however the disease was detected outside Trout Lake (GMU 578) in 2018 and has since been confirmed throughout Klickitat and Skamania counties.

While many questions remain about the disease, several aspects of TAHD in elk are clear:

- **Vulnerability:** The disease appears to be highly infectious among elk, but there is no evidence that it affects humans. TAHD can affect any hoof in any elk, young or old, male or female.
- **Hooves only:** Tests show the disease is limited to animals' hooves and does not affect their meat or organs. If the meat looks normal and if hunters harvest, process and cook it practicing good hygiene, it is probably safe to eat.
- **No treatment:** There is no vaccine to prevent the disease, nor are there any proven options for treating it in the field. Similar diseases in livestock are treated by cleaning and bandaging their hooves and giving them foot baths, but that is not a realistic option for free-ranging elk.

In 2021, WDFW implemented an [incentive-based pilot program](#) to encourage westside (400, 500, 600 series GMUs) hunters to harvest limping elk, potentially reducing prevalence of the disease over time. The objective of this program is to increase the proportion of limping elk in the total harvest, rather than increase elk harvest overall. General season or permit hunters can choose to participate in the program by submitting elk hooves at one of the many collection sites in western Washington. Hunters that submit hooves with signs of TAHD (for example, abnormal hooves) will be automatically entered into a drawing for a special incentive permit for the following license year. Multiple bull permits in western Washington with season dates of Sept. 1 through Dec. 31 will be awarded. Additionally, all participants will receive a custom, waterproof license holder.



So, what can hunters do to help?

- Harvest a limping elk from any 400, 500, 600 series GMUs.
- Turn in your elk hooves along with complete registration forms at one of several collection sites in western Washington.
- **Report elk:** Hunters can help WDFW track TAHD by reporting observations of both affected and unaffected elk on the department's online reporting form.
- **Clean shoes and tires:** Anyone who hikes or drives off-road in a known affected area can help minimize the risk of spreading the disease to new areas by removing all mud from their shoes and tires before leaving the area.

WDFW is working with scientists, veterinarians, outdoor organizations, tribal governments, and others to better understand and manage TAHD. More information about TAHD can be found on [WDFW's website](#) and [Washington State University's TAHD page](#). Additional information on TAHD and this incentive program can also be found on page 65 of the Big Game Hunting Pamphlet.



Example of elk hooves deformed by TAHD. Photo by WDFW.

# Deer

Deer populations are generally stable in lower-elevation units such as Washougal (568) and Battle Ground (564). Deer harvests in West Klickitat (578), Grayback (388), and East Klickitat (382) were slightly lower in 2022 compared to 2020-2021, however hunter effort was much lower in 2022. Deer populations are generally low in the Cascade Mountain GMUs, including Lewis River (560), Wind River (574), and Siouxon (572). The extreme winter of 2016-17 hurt deer populations throughout District 9 but recent harvest statistics indicate some recovery. December 2023 aerial surveys in GMUs 388 and 382 indicate a slight increase in the population. Additionally, March 2024 driving route surveys in 388 showed an average fawn-to-doe ratio indicating that fawns born in 2023 had an average survival rate. To facilitate recovery of the deer population in GMUs 578, 388, and 382, nearly all antlerless permits have been removed. As the population recovers, those permits will be gradually reinstated. Deer harvest and success is remarkably consistent within District 9, where hunters are expected to harvest approximately 2,000 bucks during the 2024 general season, representing a success rate of 20-25%. You can find historical information on deer harvest trends in District 9 on the WDFW website under [Game Harvest Statistics](#) and [Game Status and Trend Reports](#).

Successful black-tailed deer hunting largely depends on the effort that hunters put into the hunt. Black-tailed deer thrive in dense vegetation and are often highly nocturnal. Successful black-tailed deer hunters must be in position early in the morning and carefully hunt near sources of food and secure cover.

Bucks travel more during the rut, covering large amounts of territory searching for does in estrus. This makes bucks more vulnerable, as they spend less time hiding. You can sometimes find them in open habitats such as clear-cuts and meadows. Not surprisingly, approximately one-third of the annual buck harvest in Region 5 occurs during the four-day late buck hunt held each November.

Within District 9, GMUs 554 (Yale), 560 (Lewis River), 564 (Battle Ground), 568 (Washougal), and 572 (Siouxon) offer an attractive general season hunting opportunity. However, hunters should note the firearm restrictions in GMUs 554 and 564 (see page 90 of the [2024 Big Game Hunting Seasons and Regulations Pamphlet](#)).

Those interested in trophy hunting opportunities for deer might consider any of the Klickitat County units. GMU 578 (West Klickitat), GMU 388 (Grayback), and GMU 382 (East Klickitat) are each managed under a 3-point or greater antler restriction. Collectively, the Klickitat GMUs support an annual harvest of around 1,000 three-point or greater bucks. Hunters are advised to carefully review the regulations before heading out, as the rules differ in each unit, and none of the Klickitat GMUs allow general season late buck rifle hunting. GMU 382 is primarily private land, with the exception of the Simcoe Mountains Unit of the Klickitat Wildlife Area. The main units of the Klickitat Wildlife Area are located in GMU 388 and provide good deer hunting opportunities. GMU 578 has some blocks of DNR land and private industrial forestlands that are open to non-motorized vehicle access.



Some areas may be closed to both motorized and non-motorized vehicle access. Hunters are advised to scout thoroughly, even in familiar areas, as deer distribution may have changed and normal hunting lands may be closed due to fire danger.



Successful Grayback hunt. Photo by Tyler Wilson.

Figure 2: General season and permit deer harvest in GMU 578

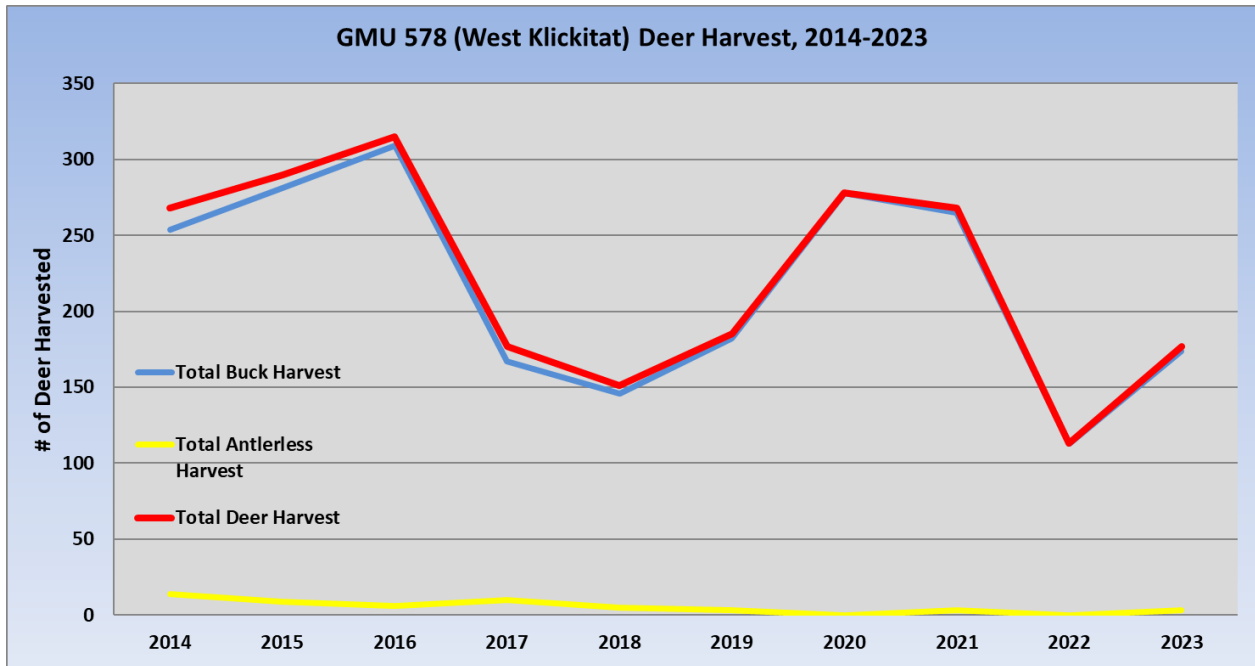


Figure 3: General season and permit deer harvest in GMU 388

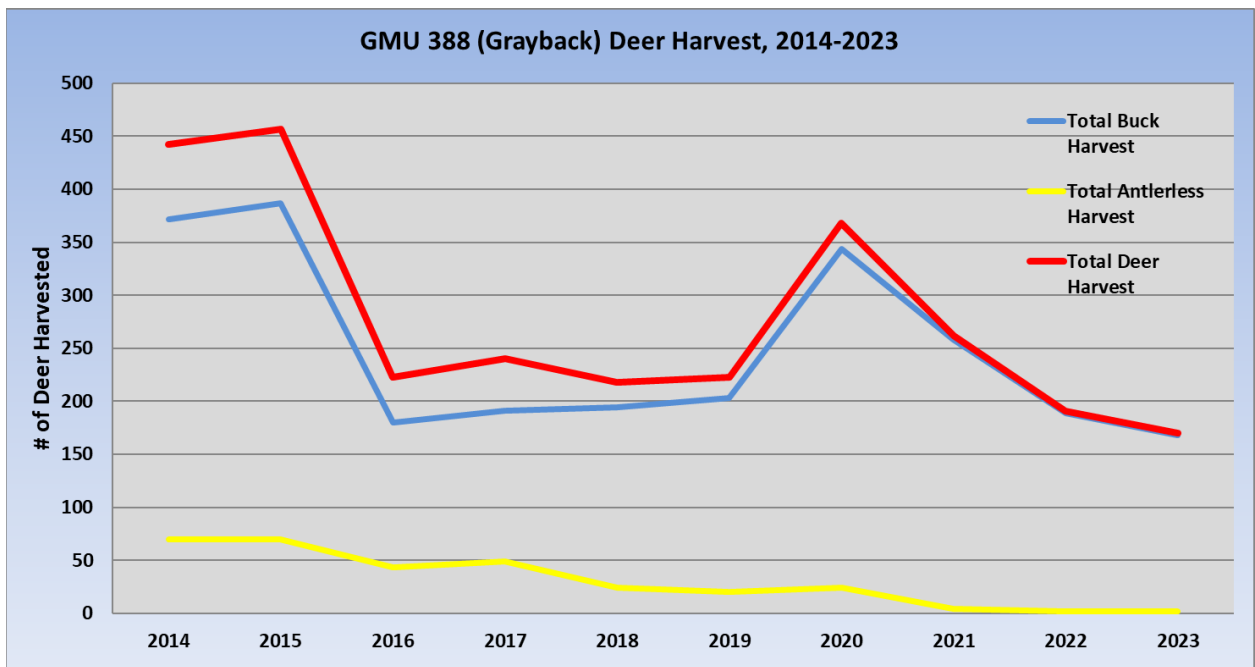
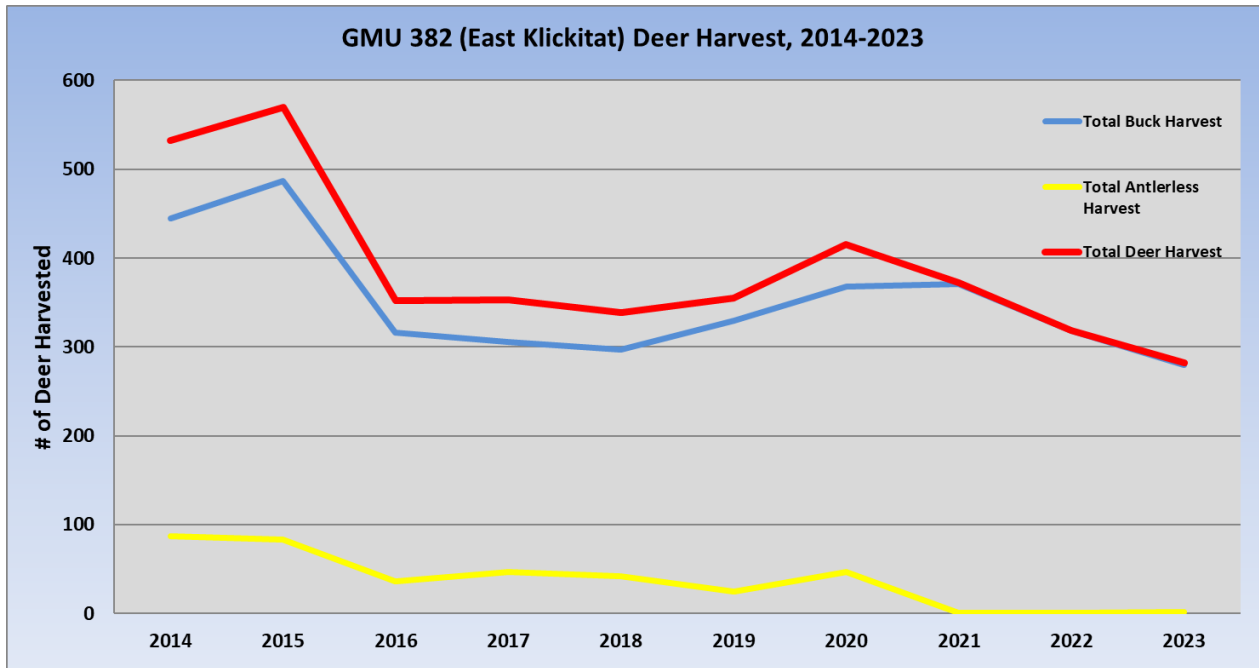


Figure 4: General season and permit deer harvest in GMU 382



## Black bear



Black bear. Photo by WDFW.

District 9 is part of both the South Cascades and East Cascades black bear hunt zones for the fall bear hunting season. In 2023, both the South Cascades zone (which includes GMUs 574, 572, 568, 564, and 560) and the East Cascades zone (which includes GMUs 578, 388, and 382) are open from Aug. 1-Nov. 15. The bag limit is now two black bears per license year statewide. In 2023, hunters harvested 182 bears in the South Cascades (5% success rate) and 289 in the East Cascades zone (7% success rate), which are lower than the harvest rates for 2022. The 2023 success rates are slightly below the 2023 statewide average of 9 percent. Currently, no spring black bear hunts are available in District 9.

**All successful bear hunters are required to submit the premolar tooth in a tooth envelope by Dec. 1, 2024.** Refer to page 68 of the [2024 Big Game Hunting Regulations pamphlet](#) for details.



Figure 5: Mandatory bear tooth submission information.

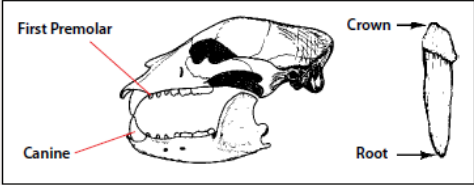
## MANDATORY Submission of Bear Teeth Statewide

ALL successful bear hunters MUST submit the **complete, unbroken root of the** 1st premolar tooth from their harvest per WAC 220-415-090. Teeth should be sent using WDFW's pre-paid and self-addressed mortality envelope which can be obtained at any WDFW office or by calling (see page 6).

**Successful hunters, please submit the required tooth from your harvest within 5 days of harvest, or by December 1, 2024.**

WDFW uses teeth to get an accurate age of harvested bears. Hunters wanting to check the age of their harvested bear can visit the following website:  
<https://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/requirements/harvest-reporting/tooth-lookup>

Teeth are aged by an external laboratory and the turnaround time for age results can be up to 6 months after the close of the fall big game hunting season.



## Cougar



Cougar in a ponderosa pine tree. Photo by WDFW.

Cougars are difficult to hunt, so deer and elk hunters typically harvest them when the opportunity presents itself. In 2024, the cougar hunting season runs from Sept. 1 to March 31, or when the cap is reached, whichever occurs first. While the current cougar hunting regulations are not included in the printed hunting pamphlet, they can be found in the [online regulations](#). For more information on these guidelines and to check on the status of your desired hunting area, visit the [cougar hunting webpage](#) on the WDFW website.

All successful cougar hunters must report their harvest to the toll-free Cougar Hotline (866-364-4868, press 3 after the recording) within 72 hours, and all cougar pelts must be sealed by WDFW within five days of harvest (skull and hide unfrozen with proof of sex attached to the pelt). [Contact a WDFW office](#) to make an appointment to have a cougar pelt sealed.

All hunters who purchase a cougar tag must report their hunt activity (successful or unsuccessful) via the WILD system by March 31, 2025.

## Waterfowl



Waterfowl Hunting in Clark County. Photo by Brad Cady.



## Goose hunting

Most goose hunting opportunities in District 9 occur in Clark County, which is part of Goose Management Area 2 - Inland. Hunters are reminded of the complex goose hunting regulations designed to protect wintering populations of the dusky Canada goose. New hunters and those whose hunting authorization for Area 2 (Coast or Inland) was invalidated during the previous year must pass an exam with a minimum score of 80% to receive authorization for the current year. Please visit our [Goose Identification](#) webpage for more information.

Goose hunting opportunities in Skamania County are very limited. Goose hunting in Klickitat County is limited and primarily occurs on private lands, where landowner permission is required. Please note that the daily bag limit is 23 geese, which can include up to three Canada geese of any subspecies (except dusky geese), up to 10 white geese (Snow and Ross's geese), and up to 10 white-fronted geese. For detailed information on season length and bag limits, refer to the [2024-25 Game Bird and Small Game Hunting Regulations](#).

A successful goose hunting season in Clark County relies on sufficient fall and early winter precipitation to fill the wetlands, as well as cold weather in the northern portions of the migratory route to push the geese south. Check hunting reports from northwestern Washington and Coastal British Columbia, monitor weather forecasts, and scout your hunting areas in advance to ensure geese have arrived and are congregating in huntable areas.

### Important information for Area 2 goose hunting

Goose hunting in Clark, Cowlitz, and Wahkiakum counties is subject to the additional restrictions of Goose Management Area 2 (GMA2) - Inland. These restrictions are in place to protect the dusky subspecies of the Canada goose. We encourage goose hunters to review the different subspecies of Canada geese in southwest Washington before each hunting season.

The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission has approved the following regulations for the 2024-25 southwest Washington goose hunting season in cooperation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the states of Oregon and Alaska:

- The season for dusky Canada geese is **closed**. If a hunter takes a dusky Canada goose or does not comply with a field check, that hunter's authorization will be invalidated, and the hunter will not be able to hunt geese in Goose Management Area 2 for the rest of the season.
- Goose Management Area 2 is split between the Coast (Pacific County and a portion of Grays Harbor County west of Highway 101) and Inland (Clark, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties, and a portion of Grays Harbor County east of Highway 101).
- In Goose Management Area 2 (Coast or Inland), legal goose hunting hours begin 30 minutes after the start of official waterfowl hunting hours to 30 minutes before the end of official waterfowl hunting hours.
- Starting in 2019, goose hunters planning to hunt in Goose Management Area 2 (Coast or Inland) began receiving a harvest record card when purchasing their licenses. Immediately after taking a

goose, you must fill out your harvest card in ink. You are required to report the information on your harvest card to WDFW by using the [online reporting system](#) or by mailing the cards to: WDFW, Wildlife Program – Waterfowl Section, PO Box 43141, Olympia WA 98504. The reporting deadline is March 20, 2025. Reports need to be postmarked by the reporting deadlines even if you did not harvest any birds. Please note that you must comply with these reporting requirements, or you will be required to pay a \$10 administrative fee before obtaining a harvest record card the next year.

- The goose hunting season will be open every day from Sept. 7-15 as well as Oct. 12-27, and on selected dates (Saturdays, Sundays, and Wednesdays) from Nov. 20, 2024-Jan. 12, 2025, and Feb 8-March 5, 2025.

Hunters are advised to review the revised [goose identification training program](#) before hunting and check the [2024-25 Game Bird and Small Game Hunting Regulations](#) for more information. Wildlife managers are relying on southwest Washington goose hunters to make this season format successful to ensure goose hunting can remain open in permit zones.

Most public goose hunting in Clark County is in the Vancouver lowlands and Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge. Hunter access to Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge is by reservation only. Estimates for the 2023 goose season are available [on the game harvest reports webpage](#), under “Small Game.”

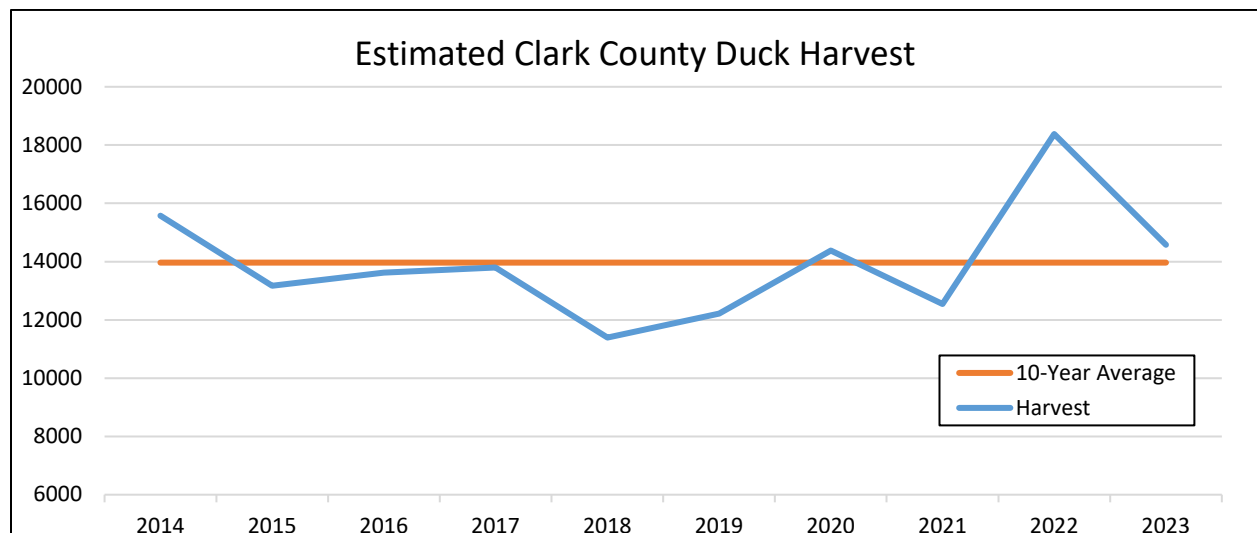
## Duck hunting



Clark County duck harvest. Photo by Sam Gibbons.

The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission has approved a liberal duck hunting season of 108 days, including two youth hunt days (one in eastern Washington and one in western Washington), a one-day hunt for youth, veterans, and active military members, and a 105-day general season. The daily bag limit is seven ducks. Like Canada goose hunting, most public access for duck hunting in Clark County is limited to the Vancouver lowlands and Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge. Daily bag and possession limits for ducks (as well as coots, snipe, and pigeon) have not changed in recent seasons. However, starting in 2022, Harlequin ducks have been closed to harvest statewide. Over the last 10 years, the annual estimated harvest of ducks in Clark County has been relatively stable, averaging 13,966 ducks harvested per season. Similar to goose season, a successful duck hunt in Clark County requires ample rainfall in the fall and winter. Be sure to scout the area you plan to hunt or call the local Refuge or Wildlife Area manager for a water-level report before heading into the field. Estimates for the 2023 duck season are available [on the game harvest reports webpage](#), under “Small Game.”

**Figure 6: Estimated duck harvest in Clark County from 2014-2023.**



For more information on North American waterfowl populations and duck hunt locations in Clark County, use the following links:

- [fws.gov/program/migratory-birds](https://fws.gov/program/migratory-birds)
- [fws.gov/refuge/ridgefield/visit-us/activities/hunting](https://fws.gov/refuge/ridgefield/visit-us/activities/hunting)
- [wdfw.wa.gov/places-to-go/wildlife-areas/shillapoo-wildlife-area](https://wdfw.wa.gov/places-to-go/wildlife-areas/shillapoo-wildlife-area)

# Turkey



Turkeys along the Klickitat River. Photo by WDFW.

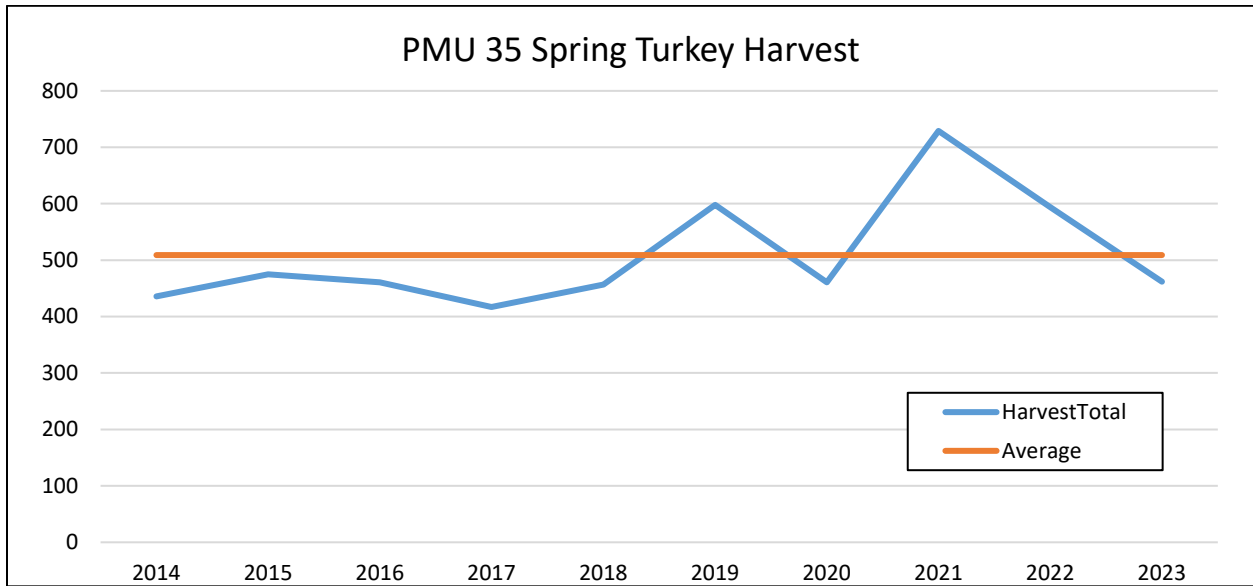
Wild turkey populations in Klickitat County remain very healthy and hunting conditions for fall 2024 are expected to be typical for this area. The 2024 fall turkey season in District 9 is open to general season hunting, which means no special permit is required. The fall turkey hunting season runs from Sept. 1- Dec. 31, and the bag limit is now two turkey (either sex). This is the fourth year of a four-month-long general season, which now includes the higher bag limit. Please refer to page 36 in the [2024 Game Bird and Small Game Hunting Regulations](#) for more information.

In fall 2023, 147 turkeys were harvested during the District 9 fall general season (includes GMUs 382, 388, 568-578) with a success rate of 34%. The success rate (2022: 35%; 2021: 23%; 2020: 38%; and 2019: 40%) and number of turkeys harvested (2022: 221; 2021: 164; 2020: 155; and 2019: 150) was about average compared to previous fall seasons.

Historically, the spring turkey season in Klickitat County has resulted in a much higher harvest when compared to the fall season, with a 10-year average of 500 birds. The estimated turkey harvest for the 2023 spring season was 462 turkeys, which is lower than the 594 taken in 2022, but still around average. Both the 2021 and 2022 spring seasons saw a considerably higher number of hunters and hunt days compared to 2019 and 2020, but these metrics declined again in 2023. Spring success rates have ranged between 24-40% since 2012. Estimates for the 2023 turkey season are available on the game harvest reports webpage, under "Turkey."



**Figure 7: Estimated spring turkey harvest in PMU 35 (GMUs 382, 388, 568-578) from 2014-2023.**



Most of the quality turkey hunting areas in Klickitat County are below 1,500 feet. Popular turkey hunting areas are generally associated with the White Salmon and Klickitat River drainages. East of the Klickitat River, turkeys can be found in the Klickitat Wildlife Area units, including the easternmost Simcoe Mountains Unit, as well as adjacent BLM lands. Hunters should note that a significant portion of private timberland in Klickitat County, owned by Western Pacific Timber and previously open to walk-in hunting, closed to public access in 2023. Having hunted turkeys in an area in the past does not guarantee it is still open to public hunting. Please do your research before heading out and check your mapping apps or the [Klickitat County GIS website](#) for ownership information.

Some landowners in western Klickitat County report turkey damage on their property and may be willing to provide access to turkey hunters who request permission and practice good hunting ethics. Additionally, WDFW enrolls private properties specifically for the spring turkey season through the [Private Lands Access Program](#).

Outside of Klickitat County, turkey hunting opportunity within District 9 is limited. In Skamania County, turkey populations are primarily located in the eastern part of the county, between Wind River and Underwood, and below 1,000 feet in elevation. However, flocks of turkeys have been reported as far west as Beacon Rock. Clark County offers little to no turkey hunting opportunity.



Successful Spring turkey season. Photo by Chris Wilson.

## Forest grouse

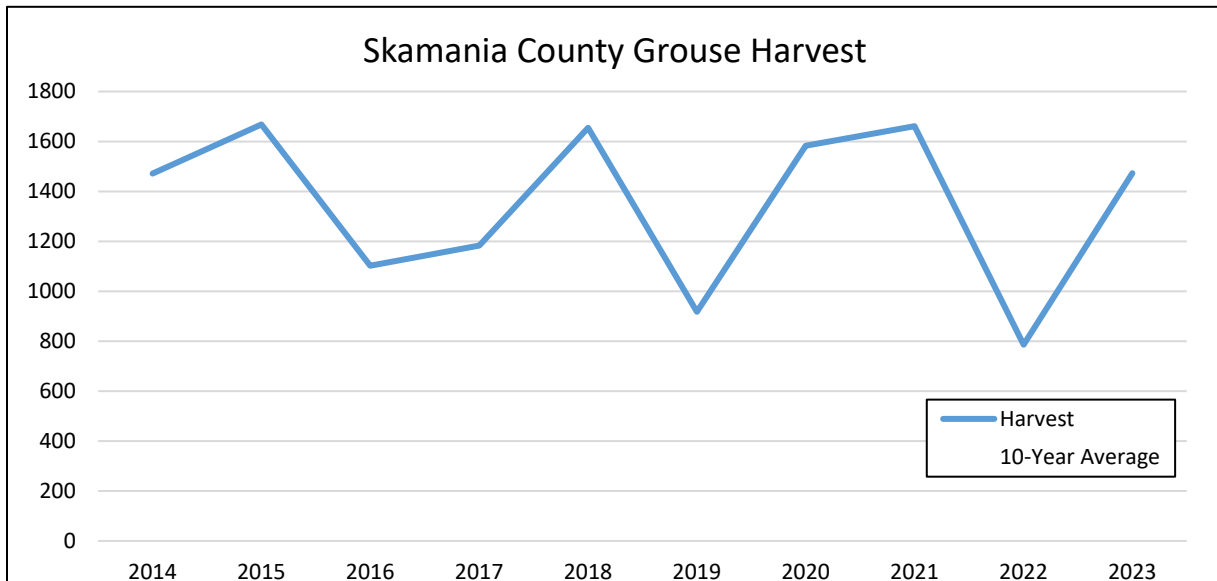


Ruffed grouse in the snow. Photo by WDFW.

The grouse hunting season in Washington runs from Sept. 15-Jan 15. The shift to a Sept. 15 opening date was implemented to protect brood hens with chicks. Skamania County, which is predominately public land, provides grouse hunters with the most opportunity in District 9. The best grouse habitat in District 9 is on USFS lands in Skamania County and DNR lands in western and north-central Klickitat County.



**Figure 8: Estimated forest grouse harvest Skamania County from 2014-2023.**



Most grouse harvest in District 9 occurs during general deer and elk hunting seasons, with birds being hunted opportunistically. Prospective hunters should concentrate their hunting efforts on brushy riparian zones, overgrown abandoned logging roads, and forest service roads for the best chance at success, particularly for ruffed grouse. Hunters interested in forest grouse can improve their chances by scouting areas before their hunt. Estimates for the 2023 forest grouse season are available on the game harvest reports webpage, under “Small Game.”

In 2019, District 9 started collecting the wings and tails of hunter-harvested forest grouse to collect more data and better track population trends for each species. Grouse hunters can help by depositing one wing and the tail of harvested grouse into collection barrels located throughout District 9. Paper collection bags and instructions are available at each barrel location. Please use one bag for each bird and do not deposit wings in a plastic bag. Forest grouse wing and tail [collection locations](#) can be found on the WDFW website. Please note that barrel locations are subject to change before or during the grouse season, so hunters are encouraged to check the website frequently.



Skamania County Wing Collection Barrel. Photo by WDFW.

District 9 falls within both the Southwest (Clark and Skamania counties) and South Central (Klickitat County) Forest Grouse Management Zones. In the Southwest Zone, most collected grouse wings are from ruffed grouse, while in the South Central Zone, blue grouse (formally known as sooty or dusky grouse) are more commonly collected (Table 2.). Data from the 2023 wing collections is not yet available.

**Table 1: Number of forest grouse wings collected in each Forest Grouse Management Zone, 2016-2022.**

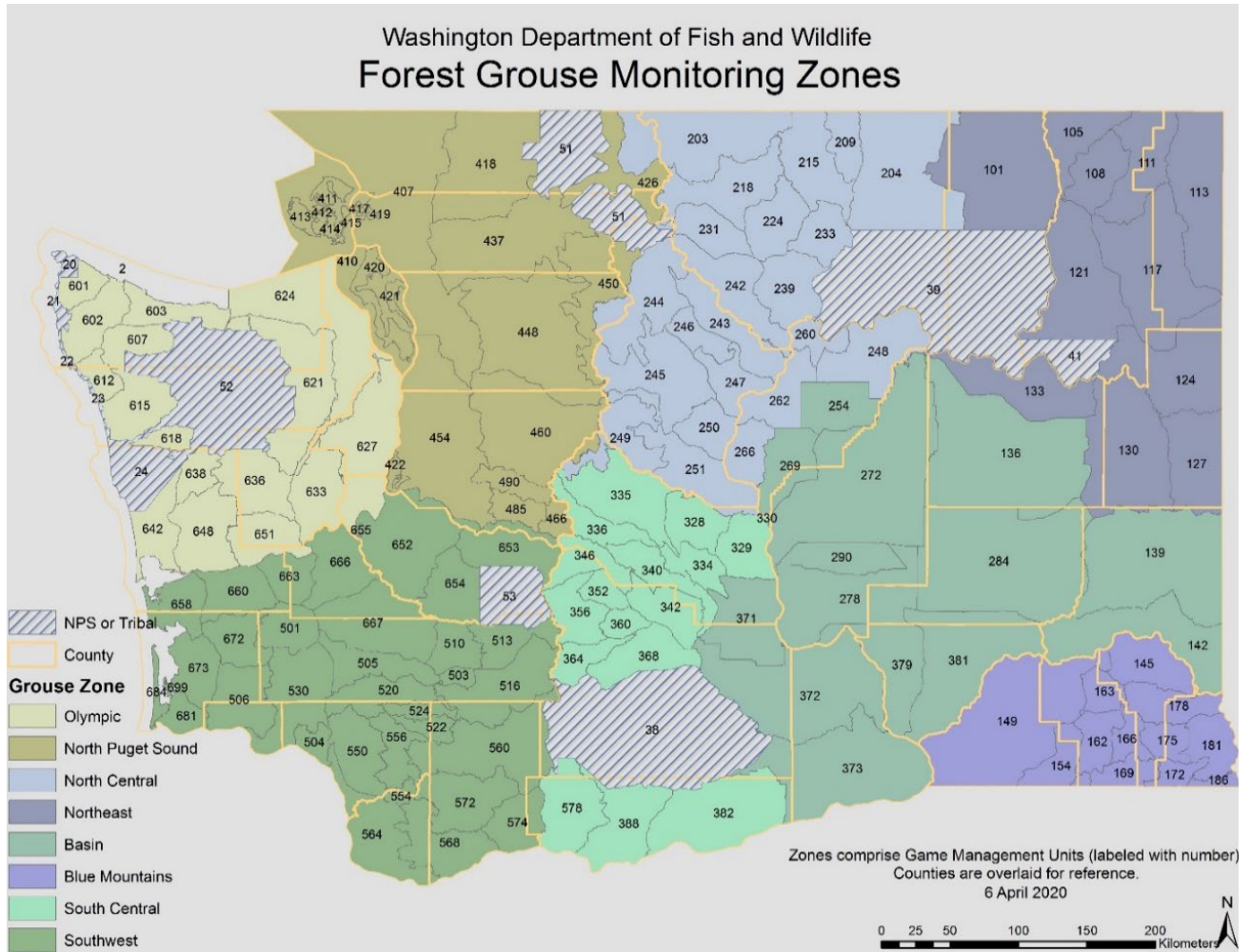
Zone	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Basin	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Blue Mtns	0	3	0	0	37	0	49	89
North Central	349	458	367	330	332	184	193	2213

<b>Zone</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>North Puget Sound</b>	0	0	0	41	170	126	66	403
<b>Northeast</b>	148	190	145	140	176	188	194	1181
<b>Olympic</b>	32	169	100	173	143	151	82	850
<b>South Central</b>	90	180	150	125	7	34	68	654
<b>Southwest</b>	3	0	234	260	222	188	117	1024
<b>Unknown</b>	0	2	57	45	10	17	44	175
<b>Total</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>1002</b>	<b>1053</b>	<b>1116</b>	<b>1097</b>	<b>888</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>6591</b>

**Table 2: Number of wings collected by species in each District 9 Grouse Monitoring Zone since 2019.**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Ruffed Grouse</b>	<b>Blue Grouse</b>	<b>Spruce Grouse</b>
<b>Southwest Zone</b>			
<b>2019</b>	177	84	0
<b>2020</b>	144	78	0
<b>2021</b>	146	42	0
<b>2022</b>	71	46	0
<b>South Central Zone</b>			
<b>2019</b>	26	98	1
<b>2020</b>	3	4	0
<b>2021</b>	8	26	0
<b>2022</b>	21	47	0

Figure 9: Statewide map of the Forest Grouse Monitoring Zones.





## Dove



A mourning dove. Photo by WDFW.

Dove hunting is open statewide annually from Sept. 1-Oct. 30. In District 9, most dove harvest occurs in Clark and Klickitat counties. In Clark County, dove hunting opportunities are available on WDFW lands in the Vancouver lowlands, including the Shillapoo Wildlife Area. Over the past ten years, dove hunters in Clark County have averaged a yearly harvest of 379 birds, although the estimated harvest varies widely depending on annual participation.

Most dove hunting opportunities in Klickitat County are associated with private hunt clubs in the eastern part of the county. With the majority of Klickitat County being privately owned, hunters should be sure to secure permission from private landowners before hunting on private land. Over the past ten years, the average dove harvest in Klickitat County has been 152 birds, although it still varies widely despite relatively stable participation.

Estimates for the 2023 dove season are available on the [game harvest reports](#) webpage, under “Small Game.” Please note that the above statistics refer only to mourning doves, which have a daily bag limit of 15 and possession limit of 45 for the hunting season. Eurasian collared doves are an invasive species and can be hunted year-round with a valid hunting license. Eurasian collared doves are often found in urban and human-occupied areas, so hunters should be sure to abide by any local firearm restrictions. Eurasian collared doves are larger than mourning doves, which have a distinctive black “collar” on the back of their neck and a square-tipped tail, whereas mourning doves have a pointed tail.



## Pheasant



Pheasant hunting in Clark County. Photo by Brad Cady.

District 9 has very limited, if any, wild pheasant production, especially in comparison to other areas of eastern Washington. Pheasant hunting opportunities are primarily from pen-raised birds released at designated locations in Klickitat County (Eastern Washington Pheasant Release Sites) and Clark County (Western Washington Pheasant Release Sites). In Clark County, an average of 3,316 pheasants are harvested each season, with most pheasant hunting occurring at the Vancouver Lake and Shillapoo release areas. In Klickitat County, most pheasant hunting occurs at three release sites near Goldendale or the surrounding private properties (with landowner permission). In Klickitat County, where public hunting acreage is limited and fewer pheasants are released, the average annual harvest is only 163

birds. More information about the [Western Washington Pheasant Release Program](#) (for Clark and Skamania counties) and [Eastern Washington Pheasant Release Program](#) (for Klickitat County), including maps of the release sites, is available on the WDFW website. Estimates for the 2023 pheasant season are available on the [game harvest reports webpage](#), under “Small Game.”

## **Clark County pheasant release sites**

### **Shillapoo Wildlife Area**

The Vancouver Lake and Shillapoo release sites are located on WDFW-managed land and cover approximately 1,450 acres. To reach both the Vancouver Lake and Shillapoo release sites, take the Fourth Plain Blvd. exit (exit #1D) off I-5 and head west on Fourth Plain Blvd. To access the Vancouver Lake release site, head north on Fruit Valley Road and then west on La Frombois Road. To access the Shillapoo release site, continue on Lower River Road to the site. Hunters should be aware that these areas are extremely popular on Saturdays, typically with more than 100 vehicles at the Shillapoo release sites.

### **Klickitat County pheasant release sites**

Each year, WDFW releases approximately 350 pheasants at three Klickitat County sites. One site is on department-owned land, while the other two are on privately-owned lands enrolled in the WDFW Private Lands Access Program as “Feel Free to Hunt” properties. Please respect the land; hunting on private lands is a privilege. All sites are day use only, with no overnight camping permitted. These sites are relatively undeveloped with primitive road access. In early fall, the fire risk is often high, so please take necessary precautions. After fall rains and snow, roads can become slippery and muddy, so choose parking spots carefully to avoid getting stuck. Driving off-road or on private land is prohibited year-round. Additionally, the use of non-toxic shot is required within designated release areas.

### **Goldendale Hatchery pheasant release site**

WDFW manages this 240-acre site, which is bordered by Hill Road on the west side and Fish Hatchery Road on the north. From Goldendale, drive west on Highway 142 for approximately four miles until you reach Hill Road. Drive north on Hill Road for roughly half a mile, cross the bridge over Spring Creek, then turn east onto a dirt road leading to WDFW property. This road will take you to the center of the site.

A parcel of private land adjacent to the Goldendale Hatchery release site is currently enrolled in the WDFW Private Lands Access Program as a “Hunt by Reservation” property called Fish Hatchery Road. To hunt on the land, you must make a reservation online. Visit the [WDFW Private Lands webpage](#) to make your reservation, access property details and maps, and check for temporary closures.

Please note: Hatchery facilities are located along the parcel’s east boundary. Please avoid the area near the buildings to ensure the safety of workers and protection of infrastructure.

## Gun Club Property – Feel Free to Hunt

This 480-acre site is privately-owned, bordered by Rogers Road to the north and Fenton Lane to the east. The property features high-quality wildlife habitat, with a mix of open grasslands, shrub cover, trees, and a small lowland area that seasonally hold water.

From the Broadway Street intersection in Goldendale, drive east on Bickleton Highway for 5.6 miles until you reach the Purvine Road intersection. Turn right (south) on Purvine Road and drive 0.9 miles to the T-intersection with Rogers Road. You can turn left or right on Rogers Road and look for the wire gates marking the property—there are two gates, both with WDFW Access Program signage. Park along Rogers Road outside the fence and walk in. **Caution:** -Purvine Road may be impassable when wet. For better access, continue east another mile on the Bickleton Highway, then turn right (south) onto Fenton Lane. Follow Fenton Lane south 1 mile to its intersection with Rogers Road. Turn right (west) onto Rogers Road and drive about 0.1 miles to the gate and parking area.

You may hunt this property without a reservation or registering. Visit the [WDFW Private Lands webpage](#) for property details and maps and check for temporary closures.

## Quail, gray partridge, and chukar



Chukar. Photo by Tom Kogut.

In District 9, upland game bird hunting is primarily focused in Klickitat County, where quail are the most frequently and successfully hunted species of the three. On average, 641 quail are harvested in Klickitat County each season, compared to approximately 195 chukar and 46 gray partridge. Access for upland bird hunting is mainly restricted to private lands and hunt clubs in eastern Klickitat County. Hunters interested in hunting this area should seek access permission in advance of the season. Most hunt clubs have waiting lists for new members, and accessing these lands can be difficult without membership. Estimates for the 2023 upland game birds are available on the [game harvest reports](#) webpage, under “Small Game.”



# Public land resources

## **DNR-Pacific Cascades Office (Clark and Skamania counties)**

360-577-2025  
601 Bond Road  
PO Box 280  
Castle Rock, WA 98611-0280

[pacific-cascade.region@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:pacific-cascade.region@dnr.wa.gov)

## **DNR-Southeast Region Office (Klickitat County)**

509-925-8510  
713 Bowers Road  
Ellensburg, WA 98926-9301

[southeast.region@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:southeast.region@dnr.wa.gov)

[Purchase DNR quad maps](#)

## **Gifford Pinchot National Forest**

### **Cowlitz Valley Ranger District**

360-497-1100  
10024 US Hwy 12  
PO Box 670  
Randle, WA 98377

### **Mt. Adams Ranger District**

509-395-3400  
2455 Hwy 141  
Trout Lake, WA 98650

### **Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument and District**

360-449-7800  
42218 N.E. Yale Bridge Rd.  
Amboy, WA 98601

### **Forest Headquarters**

360-891-5000  
987 McClellan Road  
Vancouver, WA 98661

[Forest Alerts and Closures](#)

[Mapping Resources](#)



# Private Lands Access Resources

## WDFW Private Lands Access Program

Free public hunting opportunities for different game species are available through the Private Lands Access Program. The [Private Lands Hunting Access](#) website will list the properties available by county, GMU, or type of access allowed such as:

- [Feel Free to Hunt](#)
- [Register to Hunt](#)
- [Hunt by Written Permission](#)
- [Hunt by Reservation](#)

Each property will designate what species can be hunted. Read each property description carefully and find property maps on the [Private Lands Hunting Access website](#).

NEW properties are added and removed each year, so be sure to check the [Private Lands Hunting Access](#) webpage for updates.

For Private Lands Access program information within Region 5 contact:

Monique Gray  
360-696-6211 ext. 6721  
[monique.gray@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:monique.gray@dfw.wa.gov)

# Private industrial forestlands

Private industrial forestlands are often closed to all recreation from mid-summer through early fall due to fire danger. Before scouting or hunting, be sure to check on the status of these lands. Additionally, private timberlands are often bought and sold between timber companies, so it's important to have updated ownership maps. Due to high fire danger, all lands owned or managed by the following parties in Klickitat, Skamania, and Yakima counties are closed to public access, effective July 28, 2024, until further notice: American Forest Management, Broughton Lumber Company, Columbia Land Trust, DGS Timber, Green Diamond Resource Company, Kreps Ranch, Kreps Family LLC, Lupine Forest, Manulife Forest Management, Twin Creeks Timber (TCT Holdings), and Western Pacific Timber LLC.

## Broughton Lumber Company (American Forest Management)

- Generally allows non-motorized access. Please abide by any signs posted at access points.
- Visit the [AFM website](#) for hunting maps and more information.
- Mainly GMUs 578 and 388.

## DGS Timber LLC (American Forest Management)

- Generally allows non-motorized access. Please abide by any signs posted at access points.
- Visit the [AFM website](#) for hunting access maps and more information.
- Mainly GMUs 578 and 388.

## Manulife (formerly Hancock Forest Management - HFM)

- Generally allows non-motorized access. Please abide by any signs posted at access points.
- Call the Manulife hotline: (509) 364-3331
- Mainly GMUs 578 and 388.

## PacifiCorp

- PacifiCorp owns over 15,000 acres of land within the Lewis River basin that are managed for fish and wildlife and are generally open to non-motorized access.
- Visit the [PacifiCorp website](#) for hunting access maps and more information.
- Mainly GMUs 554 and 560

## Rayonier

- Hunting access by permit only.
- Visit the [Rayonier website](#) for hunting access maps and more information.
- Call the Rayonier hotline: 855-729-4868
- GMUs 572 and 560

## The Conservation Fund/Lupine Forest/Lupine Columbia Holdings LLC (formerly Stevenson Land Company)

- Some lands are open to non-motorized access.
- Mainly GMU 578

## Green Diamond Resource Company/TCT Columbia Holdings (formerly Stevenson Land Company or Broughton Lumber)

- Many of the parcels owned or managed by Green Diamond, which span over 59,000+ acres, are enrolled in the WDFW Private Lands Access Program, including Feel Free to Hunt and Hunt by Reservation properties. Visit the [Private Lands](#) webpage for more details and contact information.
- Generally open to walk-in access on some parcels, but please abide by any posted signs. More information can be found on the [Green Diamond website](#).
- [Mainly GMUs 574 and 578](#)
- Hunters should be aware that certain blocks of lands are now closed to access.

## Weyerhaeuser

- Call the Weyerhaeuser recreational access hotline at 866-636-6531 or access details and maps on the [Weyerhaeuser website](#).
  - **Yacolt (Columbia River East)**
    - Access is by permit only. Hunters can purchase permits and find more information, including maps, on the [Weyerhaeuser website](#).
    - GMU 568
  - **Klickitat County**
    - Access is by Recreational Lease only. Please visit the [Weyerhaeuser website](#) for details and maps.
    - GMU 578

## Western Pacific Timber

- As of Sept. 1, 2023, all Western Pacific Timber lands in Klickitat County are **no longer open to any hunting access of any kind**.